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BenihanaŽ Japanese Fried Rice

When 20-year-old Rocky Aoki came to the New York City from Japan with his wrestling team in 1959 he was convinced it was the land of opportunity. Just five years later he took \$10,000 he had saved plus another \$20,000 that he borrowed to open a Benihana steakhouse on the West side of Manhattan. His concept of bringing the chefs out from the back kitchen to prepare the food in front of customers on a specially designed hibachi grill was groundbreaking. The restaurant was such a smashing success that it paid for itself within six months. Here's a clone recipe for the fried rice at Banihana that is

prepared by chefs with pre-cooked rice on those open hibachi grills.

4 cups cooked converted or parboiled rice (1 cup uncooked) 1 cup frozen peas, thawed 2 tablespoons finely grated carrot 2 eggs, beaten 1/2 cup diced onion (1/2 small onion) 1 1/2 tablespoons butter 2 tablespoons soy sauce salt pepper

1. Cook rice following instructions on package (Bring 2 cups water to a boil, add rice and a dash of salt, reduce heat and simmer in covered saucepan for 20 minutes). Pour rice into a large bowl to let it cool in the refrigerator. 2.

Scramble the eggs in a small pan over medium heat. Separate the scrambled chunks of egg into small pea-size bits while cooking. 3. When rice has cooled to near room temperature, add peas, grated carrot, scrambled egg and diced onion to the bowl. Carefully toss all of the ingredients together. 4. Melt 1 1/2 tablespoons of butter in a large frying pan over medium/high heat. 5. When butter has completely melted, dump the bowl of rice and other ingredients into the pan and add soy sauce plus a dash of salt and pepper. Cook rice for 6-8 minutes over heat, stirring often Serves 4.

Tidbits

This fried rice can be prepared ahead of time by cooking the rice, then adding the peas, carrots and egg plus half of the soy sauce. Keep this refrigerated until you are ready to fry it in the butter. That's when you add the salt, pepper and remaining soy sauce.